

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2741

E. O. 11652: GDS

TABS: PFOR MARR

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA DISCUSSES US- MOROCCAN
RELATIONS AND SUGGESTS PAYMENT OF RENT FOR US MILITARY
FACILITIES IN MOROCCO

REF: RABAT 2151

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH ME ON JUNE 15, FONMIN BENHIMA
REFERRED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM' S MEETING WITH
AMBASSADOR SENOUSSE JUNE 8. BENHIMA SAID HE HAD RECEIVED
IMPRESSION FROM SENOUSSE' S REPORT THAT USG ANTICIPATED
DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING FROM CONGRESS SUFFICIENT FUNDS
TO CARRY OUT " GLOBAL " AID PROGRAM IN MOROCCO SUGGESTED
BY BENHIMA DURING HIS MARCH VISIT TO WASHINGTON. FONMIN
APPRECIATED EFFORTS WHICH NEWSOM SAID BEING MADE TO
COME UP WITH PROGRAM FOR MOROCCO WITHIN LIMITATION OF
USG RESOURCES BUT WONDERED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE MORE
SATISFACTORY TO USG AND GOM TO AGREE UPON PAYMENT OF
RENT FOR US MILITARY FACILITIES IN MOROCCO IN LIGHT OF
FUNDING PROBLEMS USG APPARENTLY FACING.

2. I OFFERED PERSONAL VIEW THAT CONCEPT OF PAYMENT RENT,
WHICH I BELIEVED WOULD HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY CONGRESS,
WOULD CAUSE EXECUTIVE BRANCH EVEN MORE DIFFICULTY THAN
THAT RESULTING FROM DIMINISHED AID RESOURCES. I KNEW
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THAT USG MAKING SINCERE EFFORT TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO
BENHIMA' S INITIATIVE IN WASHINGTON. ONE OF ELEMENTS
UPON WHICH OUR RESPONSE WOULD BE BASED IS NEW FIVE YEAR
PLAN WHICH I UNDERSTOOD WOULD SOON BE ISSUED.

3. COMMENT: THIS APPROACH, PLUS THAT OF AMBASSADOR
SENOUSSI, REVEALS GROWING DESIRE OF GOM QUICKLY TO RECEIVE
POSITIVE RESPONSE TO BENHIMA PROPOSALS. AS REPORTED
RABAT 2151, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOW GIVE MOROCCANS SOME
IDEA OF WHAT WE THINK WE LIKELY BE ABLE TO DO FOR THEM
RATHER THAN AWAIT DETAILED EXAMINATION OF PROJECTS IN
NEW FIVE YEAR PLAN AFTER IT COMES OUT.
ROCKWELL

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